

The
Official Organ
of
The
Socialist Party
of
Great Britain.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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LONDON, NOVEMBER, 1905.

[MONTHLY, ONE PENNY

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

OBJECT.

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

Declaration of Principles

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

HOLDS

That society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master-class, and the consequent enslavement of the working-class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working-class from the domination of the master-class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

That as in the order of social evolution the working-class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working-class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

That this emancipation must be the work of the working-class itself.

That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist-class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working-class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working-class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master-class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist; and calls upon the members of the working-class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Readers who can endorse the foregoing in its entirety are invited to communicate with the Secretary of the nearest Branch or with the General Secretary. See Directory, page 8.

IS THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY SUFFICIENT?

INTERESTING LETTERS ON AN INTERESTING SUBJECT.

[The following correspondence has passed between two members of The Socialist Party of Great Britain. The subject matter is of such importance—an understanding of what is implied by the term “the materialist conception of history” being indispensable to anything like an adequate appreciation of the Socialist position—and our comrade Watts has presented his case so admirably, that we have readily undertaken to give the letters the wider publicity of these columns.—ED. CTTEE.]

Dear Comrade,—So far as I understand it, I agree with the Materialist Conception of History, but recently I have been studying the reports of the Sociological Society, which magnify the problem of the unification of the Social sciences until it appears almost insoluble; and I have had my faith shaken in the sufficiency of the Materialist Conception because these learned people have made the question appear so great that the Materialist Conception appears too simple. I will, therefore, explain the difficulty according to the disciples of the Sociological Society.

They appear to agree that society is an organism of a complicated type, and that these complications are made intelligible only through their relations being truly comprehended. They view the sociological field as at present being separated into many particular fields, each in the hands of specialist investigators, and they claim that the sociologist (through the Sociological Society) is the scientist whose duty it is to co-ordinate the social specialisms and generalise from the investigations of the social sciences. They consider that the specialist investigators should work with the idea of the ultimate unity of their investigations, an idea that they claim it is one of the duties of the Sociological Society to foster. They deprecate the interpretation of the highly complex social phenomena in the terms of any one specialism; and this, it seems to me, is the point that particularly touches us.

On every hand we see men working with a view to the application of their particular remedy for various social evils. Do we not come under the same ban? Do we not offer a sort of Morrison's Pill for the earthquake? Socialism, at the last and ultimate analysis, is an economic proposition, a fundamental one, I grant, but still purely economic. Now the economic relations of men in society are not the only ones. We say: true, but all other relations grow out of the economic ones, and this, as I understand it, is the basis of the Materialist Conception of History. The point, then, is to demonstrate that the all important, the dominating factor in society is its economic conditions.

There are a considerable number of people sometimes designated cranks, who desire to regenerate society through the application of their particular Morrison's Pill. According to your alleged philosophic radical, all that is required is political perfection—the carrying of certain political revolutionary reforms (I use the

Hibernianism advisedly). According to the temperance fanatic, all that is required is the entire removal of the “drink evil,” root and branch. The ethical reformer seeks to emphasise the moral factor in social relations and through that means to establish the millenium. The orthodox man seeks that everybody should believe that certain impossible things once happened, and through that belief, somehow, I know not how, the millenium is coming. And so on. Every reformer of whatever colour or creed, has some Morrison's Pill to give Society, to cure it of all its evils at one blow. But again I ask, does not the Socialist fall into the same category? He says that ethical, moral, religious; artistic, æsthetic; political and intellectual relations are fundamentally determined by the economic relations, and he seeks to alter those economic relations so that following from such revolutionary change should come the change (and, of course, improvement) in the ethical, moral, religious; artistic, æsthetic; political, intellectual, and all other relations.

Now the difficulty seems to be, even granting all that we claim for the dominance of economic conditions, how far can man's intellect get ahead of his economic and other conditions, and frame ideas and ideals to work to and for? If man's ideas were rigidly determined by his economic environment, the Socialist would be impossible, and indeed, the social conservative would be impossible, too, because in the same environment we find most divergent minds.

The whole problem that I am trying to formulate would seem to be the old one of “free-will” and “determinism.” And the only explanation of the divergences can be the individual temperament, call it what you will. So that the position seems to resolve itself into the effects of the action of the environment (in which must be included every influence which the human mind comes into contact with from first to last) on the individual personality, the “ego.” The great difficulty would seem to be, therefore, the true recognition of the forces that go to make up that ego through hereditary channels. Is our knowledge of the action of heredity sufficient for the formulation of a philosophy that should comprehend all the influence that go to make men, in all their strange variations of temperament?

In conclusion, therefore, I would ask, is the Materialist Conception sufficient for the explanation of all the complex phenomena of modern Society?

Fraternally yours,
“ENGINEER.”

P.S.—of course, you must not suppose that I am such a heretic on the Socialist philosophy as I appear from the above. I have exaggerated my own difficulties in order, not only to make the matter more controversial, but to, so far as possible, get the other side discussed.

Dear Comrade,—I have read your letter on the

Materialist Conception of History, and as I held firmly to that conception as a guiding principle (having entirely convinced myself of its truth), I shall be glad to discuss the matter.

Before doing so, however, I will ask you to carefully peruse the following somewhat lengthy but exceedingly important quotation from Marx's "Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," which gives an explanation of the Materialist Conception of History, as it is necessary to define our terms before using them as signs in our discussion.

This extract is from the preface to Marx's "Critique of Political Economy." Published (in Germany) 1857.

"The first work which I undertook for the purpose of solving the doubts which perplexed me was a critical re-examination of Hegel's 'Philosophy of Law.' The introduction to this work appeared in the German French Year Books of 1844. My investigations ended in the conviction that legal relations and forms of government cannot be explained either by themselves or by the so-called development of the human mind, but, on the contrary, have their roots in the conditions of men's existence, whose totality Hegel, following the French and English writers of the eighteenth century, summed up under the name of civil society; and that the anatomy of civil society must be sought in political economy, to which study I next gave my attention.

"The general result at which I arrived and which, once obtained, served as a guide for my subsequent studies, can be briefly formulated as follows:

"In making their livelihood together men enter into certain necessary, involuntary relations with each other.

"These industrial relations arise out of their respective conditions and occupations and correspond to whatever stage society has reached in the development of its material productive forces.

"Different stages of industry produce different relations.

"The totality of these industrial relations constitutes the economic structure and basis of society.

"Upon this basis the legal and political superstructure is built.

"There are certain forms of social consciousness or so-called public opinion which correspond to this basis.

"The method prevailing in any society of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political and intellectual life of men in general.

"It is not primarily men's consciousness which determines their mode of life; on the contrary it is their social life which determines their consciousness.

"When the material productive forces of society have advanced to a certain stage of their development they come into opposition with the old conditions of production, or, to use a legal expression, with the old property relations under which these forces have hitherto been exerted.

"Instead of serving longer as institutions for the development of the productive powers of society, these antiquated property relations now become hindrances. Then begins an epoch of social revolution.

"With the change of the economic basis the whole vast superstructure undergoes, sooner or later, a revolution.

"In considering such revolutions we must always distinguish clearly between the change in the industrial methods of social production on the one hand; this change takes place unconsciously, strictly according to the laws of natural science, and might properly be called an evolution.

"And, on the other hand, the change in the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical, in short, ideological, institutions; with reference to these men fight out this battle as a revolution conscious of their opposing interests. This conflict takes the form of a class struggle.

"As little as we judge an individual by what he thinks he is, just as little can we judge such revolutionary epoch by its own consciousness.

"We must rather explain this consciousness out of the antagonisms of men's industrial occupations, out of the conflict existing between the productive capacity of social industry and the legal institutions under which this industry is carried on.

"A society, no matter what its form may be, is never broken up until all the productive powers are developed for which it is adapted.

"New and higher social institutions are never established until the material conditions of life to support them have been prepared in the lap of the old society itself. Therefore, mankind never sets for itself any tasks, except those for which it has received proper training and which it is able to perform.

"If we examine closely, it will always be found that the conflict never arises except where the material conditions of its solution are already at hand, or at least are in the process of growth.

"We may in wide outlines characterise the Asiatic, the antique, the feudal and the modern capitalistic methods of production as a series of progressive epochs in the evolution of economic society.

The industrial relations arising out of the capitalistic method of production constitute the last of the antagonistic forms of social production; antagonistic not in the sense of antagonism between individuals, but of antagonism growing out of the circumstances in which men must live who take part in social production.

"But the productive forces which are developed in the lap of capitalistic society create at the same time the material conditions needed for the abolition of this antagonism. The capitalist form of society, therefore, will bring to a close this cycle of the history of human society, as it has existed under the various forms of exploitation."

And now to proceed with my own contribution to the discussion.

All history, indeed all intellectual life, can be explained only from the accompanying and preceding material conditions, since any other theory than this postulates an uncaused thing, which is contrary to all experience, and is therefore unscientific and untenable. Intellectual life is but the reflex of material conditions. That intellectual life has a secondary reflex action upon material conditions in no way changes the fact that material conditions form the base, origin, and material of all intellectual life.

Now, in the Materialist Conception of History we are given the dominant factor in the determination of all history; that is, the method in which wealth is produced and exchanged. Obviously, in order that there may be human history two things are essential; firstly, men, and secondly, food and shelter for them. How much, where and how food and shelter can be obtained, determines, firstly, man's existence, secondly, where he shall live, and thirdly, how he shall live. Therefore the Materialist Conception of History is without doubt the determining and basic factor in all history; indeed, broadly interpreted, all material conditions are comprised in it.

Just as we speak of the "Law of Evolution" so we may speak of the Materialist Conception as the "Law of History." As in one case we can explain existing organic forms by the "Law of Evolution," so in the other case can we explain existing social forms only by the materialist "Law of History." In organic, as in social, evolution, there are many minor matters that, with our present defective knowledge we cannot yet explain. Nevertheless, it would be absurd and unscientific to abandon the law which has been proved right in so many instances the moment we come upon obscure or complicated detail whose connection with the fundamental law is not at once seen.

Both in biology and in sociology, inability to see the working of fundamental principles or laws is usually the result of insufficient knowledge, narrowness of the field of view, and a priori notions. This is especially true of the modern social specialist. Lost in a forest of detail he lacks the breadth of view that is necessary to an understanding of general principles. We do not now magnify the accidentals of zoology to the extent that the old naturalists did, who thereby got fanciful and conflicting classifications; but, probably aided by the fact that we see the detail of animal life from a distance, and so get a truer perspective than in sociology, we have grasped the basic principles of organic evolution in the food supply and the conditions of the struggle to obtain it. No science is so subjective as sociology, for here we meet the "furies of private interests;" and hampered

as are the majority of specialists by preconceived ideas and class prejudice, small wonder is there that even the most honest of them arrive at such inane conclusions. They fail to distinguish between essentials and accidentals, and detail assumes greater importance than principles or laws in consequence. "They cannot see the wood for the trees." Specialisation is, of course, essential, but the co-ordination of the social sciences can only be the work of one who takes a thorough but even view of all.

To realise the full force of the Materialist Concept a broad knowledge of history, economics, and natural science is absolutely essential, and history is the most important. Such broad surveys of history as are given in even elementary primers like Jenk's *History of Politics* and Fyffe's *History of Greece*, or in such works as Thorold Rogers' *Six Centuries of Work and Wages* and Buckle's *Introduction to the History of Civilisation*, throw into relief the general principles of history and afford a granitic foundation to the Materialist Conception.

It is too great a task to attempt any historical survey here; but it is most clear, to take the example that immediately affects us, that the tremendous transformation in this country during the last three centuries of the conditions of things and the social life arising therefrom, is directly traceable to the wonderful change which has taken place in the methods of producing and distributing wealth. A new class has been created and forced to power. The face of the country has been changed from agricultural to manufacturing. Huge towns have arisen where once were cornfields. The change from individual to social production has revolutionised social relationships. Where once men worked singly for home consumption they now work in huge armies for others, disciplined and commanded. Where once was handicraft is now giant machine production. All this has been brought about by the gradual change in the methods of producing and distributing the wealth of the country; due to the greater economy of co-operative over individual production, and to the greater economy of machine over hand labour. Modern social life is explicable only upon this basis: the line of least resistance in wealth production impelling men into entirely new social relationships.

It will be seen how curious is the idea that the scientific Socialist, by indicating economic conditions as the basis of all social relationships, has only a Morrison's Pill *a la* Carlyle to offer of no greater efficiency than is usual with such nostrums. The cure-all pill idea implies idealism. It implies that men can, out of their own souls, evolve a scheme of things and force it on society without that scheme being of necessity the outcome of present conditions and in harmony with the natural trend of things. Socialism of the scientific type is, of course, not this by any means. The various reformers with their nostrums are rather like the quacks who profess to cure virulent fevers by means of prayers, charms and incantations, or at least like the pseudo scientific quacks who prescribe drugs to counteract only the symptoms and effects of diseases, leaving the causes untouched. The Socialist is rather like the true scientist who goes to causes in material conditions, and sees that effective drainage is laid down, cleanliness maintained, and correct food given.

The question often occurs: how is it that in identical environment some are Socialists and some are conservatives, if economic conditions determine, in the last resort, the views of men? The matter of this "identical environment" can be illustrated by a simple analogy. Suppose a hundred soft clay balls were put in a bag and sat on, these balls would all be in an identical environment, like men in any class in society subjected to economic pressure, so what would happen? Some balls would be squared, some slightly flattened, and some utterly squashed, as determined by their position in this so-called identical environment. In society different classes have different environment. In a given class some would be slightly modified conservatives, and some revolutionary: as pressure increases so all would become entirely altered. All, then, would be affected, but slightly unequally, since no two balls, or two persons, could possibly be in exactly the same environment. So in society men picture the future from what they see and feel in the present. Some by

hereditary fitness and actual environment would more easily and clearly comprehend the needs of the present and the tendency of things; others in conditions less violently affected would find it more difficult to see clearly, or would from the materials to their hands or inherited weakness, form false pictures which would lure them in wrong directions.

So far from economics being but one specialisation of no greater import than a host of other artificial divisions or specialisms, economics is, then, the fundamental, the essential specialism. It is the trunk upon which all the various branches depend, or rather, to be more accurate, it is the anatomy of social life. The truth of this proposition is amply demonstrated at the bar of social history, even with the knowledge at present available; just as the truth of the law of evolution is shown at the bar of the more developed natural sciences. The conclusions of all natural science, indeed, render no other interpretation of history logically tenable except the Materialist Conception of History.

F. C. WATTS.

[A further instalment of this correspondence will appear in the next issue.]

PARTY NOTES.

It is particularly requested that all communications be addressed: "The Socialist Party of Great Britain, 1a, Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London, N." See official notice on page 4.

Last quarter 51 new members were enrolled. This is very gratifying, and shews that just in proportion as we can place our views before the public we shall add to our membership. Now that the weather has compelled us to shut down our regular open-air propaganda, we cannot, of course, expect to increase at the same rate.

In connection with the formation of new branches, I would suggest that we should "make haste slowly." The strength of an organisation does not depend upon the number of "branches" it can show on paper, but upon the activity displayed by the members. Public propaganda and the sale of literature are the test.

Members will be pleased to learn of the success attending the issue of the first instalment of the S.P.G.B. Library. The Manifesto is still selling well. Those who have not yet read it can obtain a copy direct from the Head Office, post free, 1½d. It explains the Principles and Policy of the S.P.G.B., and goes fully into our attitude towards the S.D.F., I.L.P., L.R.C., Fabian Society, Trade Unions, etc. It also contains the rules of the Party.

During the winter months the sales of our journal will probably decline somewhat, but our members will see to it, as before, that the Party funds do not suffer. Cheques and Money Orders should be made payable to A. J. M. Gray. As many as possible should become annual subscribers. For 1s. 6d. THE SOCIALIST STANDARD will be sent post free to any address in the world for twelve months.

It is suggested that Branches do their best during the indoor season to develop the latent ability they will undoubtedly find among their members by debates, lectures, classes, and other means. Too ambitious efforts are not to be encouraged at first, but a great deal of profit might be gained by discussions on the several sections of the "Declaration of Principles" and especially the "Manifesto" which contains a vast amount of condensed information.

The Sunday evening lectures will be continued during November at Sydney Hall, Battersea, and at Dovecote Hall, Wood Green, (see advertisements on pp. 3 and 8). Debates also take place on alternate Tuesday evenings at the S.P.G.B. Club, 43, York Road, Ilford. The opener on Tuesday next will be G. C. H. Carter.

The Head Office will be kept open every Saturday until 4 o'clock, for the convenience of members wishing to make payments or obtain literature, etc. G. C. H. CARTER, Gen. Sec.

OUR VIEW OF THE RECENT MUNICIPAL "ENTENTE."

At the Quarterly Meeting of Delegates held on Saturday last at the Communist Club it was unanimously resolved to send the following telegram and letter to the National Congress of the French Socialist Party in Chalon:

TELEGRAM.

London, Oct. 28th, 1905.

To the President of National Socialist Congress, Chalon, France.

Fraternal greetings but we protest against action of Paul Brousse and other Municipal Councillors, members of your Party, last week in London.

(signed) CARTER.

Secretary of The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

LETTER.

1a, Caledonian Road, London, W.C.

October 29th, 1905.

To the President of the National Socialist Congress, Chalon, France.

Dear Comrade,

We have the pleasure of confirming our telegram of yesterday which read: "Fraternal greetings, but we protest against action of Paul Brousse and other Municipal Councillors, members of your Party, last week in London."

While we note that your Party is based upon the class-struggle, we desire to point out that the recognition of the class-struggle alone is, however, not sufficient guarantee for uncompromising Socialist action in open hostility to all capitalist parties or alleged labour organisations supporting the capitalist class. We hold that Socialist principles must at all times be honestly translated into politics. Hence any alliance or co-operation with the enemies of Socialism can only tend to confuse the minds of the working-class and thus retard the achievement of their emancipation from wage slavery. If the Socialist Party of each country are to seize the political machinery, national and municipal, they can do so only by carrying the class-struggle to its logical conclusion, that is, by acting throughout in antagonism to the class which, under the present system, control the political machinery, and by doing so are enabled to retain possession and control of the means of production and distribution.

We therefore protest strongly against representatives of your Party feasting and receiving or being feasted or received by the political representatives of the capitalist class. The fact of Paul Brousse and other members of your Party having been feasted and received by the municipal representatives of the capitalist class in this country has been a severe blow to the Socialist Cause, not only in Britain, but to the whole International Socialist movement. It appears to us that this municipal "Entente" between the capitalist administration of London and the so-called Socialist municipal administration of Paris is but a municipal endorsement of the "Entente" of two capitalist governments already established. And it further appears to us that the fact of Parisian Socialist Councillors having taken part in the interchange of capitalist municipal courtesies will be utilised by the Liberal Party (which controls the London County Council) to obtain the votes of the British working class at the approaching General Election.

Seeing that at your Congress you are to consider your political action we sincerely trust that you will take such steps as will prevent in future representatives of your Party coquetting with or paying homage to the representatives of capitalism in France or abroad.

In conclusion we wish to point out that by the expression of the foregoing sentiments we do not presume to interfere with your internal affairs but to convey to you our opinion as to the action pursued by members of your Party which seriously affects the propaganda of Socialism in this country.

With fraternal greetings, I remain, dear Comrade,

Yours in the Cause of
International Socialism,
(signed) G. C. H. CARTER,
General Secretary,
The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

REVISIONISM AND THE GERMAN SOCIALIST PARTY.

In the issue of "Vorwaerts," the Central Organ of the German Socialist Party, of October the 21st last, appeared an announcement that six members of the Editorial Staff of the "Vorwaerts" had tendered their resignation to the Executive Council of the Party. The issue of the same paper of October the 24th contained the following notice:—

"To the Members of the Party.

"To-day a meeting was held in which took part the Executive Council of the Party, the Press Committee of the "Vorwaerts," the Confidential Men of Berlin and suburbs, the Chairmen and Treasurers of the 8 Socialist Election Associations, the Local Committee, the Propaganda Committee for the Province of Brandenburg and the Members of and Candidates for Parliament for the Constituencies in Berlin and suburbs. Those present resolved—only 8 dissenting: "That this meeting accepts the resignation of Comrades Buttner, Eisner, Gradnauer, Kaliski, Schroder and Wetzker as Editors of the "Vorwaerts," as such resignation will make it possible to change the conditions in the Editorial Department of the paper in accordance with the wishes and views of this meeting. The Executive Council and Press Committee are hereby instructed to take the necessary steps for replacing some of the Editorial Staff accordingly. Public information as to the incidents leading to the resignation of the said 6 comrades will be given to the members of the Party as soon as matters have been put straight in the Editorial Department."

"(Signed) The Executive Council."

For the information of those who are unable to follow up the progress of the movement in other countries it may here be explained that at the last annual Congress of the German Socialist Party the Editorial Staff of the "Vorwaerts" was requested to refrain from supporting Revisionism. The aforementioned six members of the Staff, among whom is Buttner the Editor-in-Chief, took no notice of the warning by the Congress or subsequently by the Executive Council. This body was consequently compelled to hold several meetings relating to this matter and to refuse the Staff of the "Vorwaerts" admittance thereto. This want of confidence was too much for the six above mentioned, hence their resignation. For the present there is no further news to hand. The full Editorial Staff of the "Vorwaerts" at present consists of 10 members, viz., Buttner (Chief and responsible Editor), Eisner and Gradnauer (Politics), Schroder and Kaliski (Local), Wetzker (Social), Strobel (Foreign), Canow (Economics), John (Trade Unions), and Leid (Party News). H.N.

S. P. G. B.

BATTERSEA BRANCH.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES

WILL BE GIVEN AT

SYDNEY HALL

36, YORK ROAD, BATTERSEA,
AS UNDER:—

Nov. 5th—T. A. JACKSON:

"The Philosophy of Socialism."

" 12th—H. C. PHILLIPS:

"Capitalism up-to-date."

" 19th—CON. LEHANE:

"The Poverty of the Clergy."

" 26th—J. FITZGERALD:

"The Economic Trend."

Chair at 7.30 sharp. Discussion.
ADMISSION FREE.

ECONOMIC CLASSES

Will be held every alternate Sunday (commencing Nov. 5th), at Sydney Hall, 3 p.m.

Instructor - J. FITZGERALD.

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

The Head Office of The Socialist Party of Great Britain is now situate at 1A, Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London, N., to which address ALL communications should be sent.

General correspondence should be addressed to "The General Secretary."

Articles and correspondence submitted for insertion in THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be addressed to "The Editorial Committee."

Subscriptions and advertisements for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD, and orders for pamphlets, book, &c., issued or sold by the Party, should be addressed to "The Publications Department."

The meetings of the Executive Committee are held at the Head Office on the first Saturday in each month, at 3 p.m., and on the third Tuesday in each month, at 7 p.m.

Terms of Subscriptions.

	£	s.	d.
Twelve Months	0	1	6

Scale of Charges for Advertisements.

	£	s.	d.
Per Inch, One Insertion	0	2	0
Quarter Column do.	0	5	6
Half Column do.	0	10	0
One Column do.	1	0	0

Special arrangements will be made for Advertisements to be inserted in more than one issue.

The Socialist Standard.

SATURDAY,



NOV. 4, 1905.

THE FOLLY OF FOOLS.

IN common with most other London and Suburban districts, Poplar has an unemployed problem—somewhat more acute, perhaps, in the neighbourhood of Poplar, but the same problem that afflicts every industrial centre of every capitalist country in the world, and, because capitalism is impossible without this out-of-work army, that will continue to afflict until production is organised for the use of the producer as distinguished from the profit of the non-producer, as at present. But the affairs of Poplar, being in the hands of progressive gentlemen—practically Socialists as we are informed—it follows that, in real or feigned ignorance of the inevitability of unemployment, the public progressive persons of Poplar are making efforts to solve the, under present conditions, insoluble. Their methods as compared with those of other borough councillors are, however, sensational. They want, and in this respect they are just ordinary, Mr. Balfour to call a special Parliamentary session to deal with the question—although what that amiable apostle of culture could do is not clear. Mr. Balfour, apparently, is not inclined to do anything of the sort. Whereupon our Poplar worthies spring into a great notoriety by asking that the King himself shall hear their requisition, the which the "little father," being a moderately wide-awake gentleman, agrees to. The humble and loyal representations are duly made and most graciously received (the little mother smiling sympathetically the while) and—passed back to the amiable Balfour! Whereat Poplar is delighted, Mr. and Mrs. Crooks are photographed in the act of smiling their pleasure, the Mayor walks on his heels, bearing himself proudly, and the unemployed take in their belts another hole and look hopelessly and shudderingly ahead to the rigors of a winter that threatens to be even longer and more bitter than usual.

Well, it is useless to bemoan the abysmal

ignorance that will forever follow in the wake of folly. We can only proclaim to those whom our voices will reach and who have ears to hear, that there is no hope for the working-class until they cease appealing and appealing and appealing for what they may take when they will. We can only repeat and repeat and repeat that there is no hope for the working-class until they have understood and have themselves taken over the means by which they may produce the things necessary to their life and happiness. It may seem a cold and comfortless answer to give the appeal of huddled misery crying aloud for "something now." But it is not. It is a message charged with hope and a great possibility—if only the workers will listen. It is a message that will bring the "something now"—if only the workers will listen. For, as we have so often urged, and as every indication goes to show, "something now" is never conceded except out of the fear of the possessing class. And no greater fear can be bred in their hearts than that of an intelligent working-class after the means of life—upon the ownership of which the power of the capitalist depends. At present the workers are asking for crumbs as a charity, and they get the equivalent of nothing. Let them demand the whole loaf as a right and show behind their demand a determination that will not be denied and the "something now" will surely materialize. The message of the S.P.G.B. indicates the only path that can be followed for the attainment of the "something now" or the whole loaf of presently.

—:—

THE SILENCE OF JONES AND OTHERS.

Two months ago we challenged those (members of the S.D.F. and others) who had alleged inaccuracy, misrepresentation and abuse against us to produce their evidence. We offered every facility possible to enable them to establish their charge, undertaking to withdraw anything that had been written and that we found ourselves unable to justify, in a frank and honourable manner. We knew of nothing that would bear the construction of abuse or misrepresentation, but we were quite ready to believe that those who were concerned to prefer charges against us had some basis in fact for them, and were not entirely actuated by malice. As we said then, we are anxious to remain what we have always endeavoured to be,—a clean and clear exponent of unadulterated and unadjectival Socialism, and should be grateful to anyone who would point out where we have failed and how we might remedy our defect.

Our challenge was reprinted in leaflet form, and scattered broadcast. It has been brought directly under the notice of many of our accusers, and—it has met with absolutely no response!

Very well. Let the working-class judge the motives of men who will make damaging allegations without being able to produce their proof and who will not avail themselves of the opportunity of withdrawing what they find themselves unable to substantiate. We ask the working-class of Camberne Division to note the position of Councillor J. Jones in this connection. Cllr. Jones is one of the many S.D.F. men who have accused us of villification and perverting the truth. But Cllr. Jones has supported his allegation with no proof, which is *prima facie* evidence of his inability to do so; nor has he withdrawn his allegations, which is *prima facie* evidence of the absence in him of a sufficiency of decency and honesty.

And that is all the comment we need make.

TOLSTOY—IMPOSSIBLIST!

As against those professing Socialists who endeavour to secure the kudos and advertisement attaching to the identification with their position of individuals who have, by divers methods, attained to prominence in the public eye, we are concerned that the message we bring to the working-class shall be assessed on its own merits. Just as we, knowing its harmfulness as well as its futility, are opposed to the endeavour to obtain support for Socialism by tactics of compromise and the propagation of something less than Socialism, so we are opposed to the endeavour to create for Socialism a standing of greater "respectability" by covering it with the glamour of great names—whether of monarchical countesses or mystic counts. Hence the publication in another column of the letter from Tolstoy.

Tolstoy's disclaimer may come as an awkward pronouncement to those notoriety-mongers who, having claimed to be Socialists, have claimed Count Tolstoy for their supporter and widely advertised the connection. Tolstoy, of course, is simply a Christist who has failed to understand—because perhaps he has never studied—the materialist basis to human thought and activity and who thinks that human loves and hates can be divorced from material conditions when, of course, it is precisely the material motive—the desire for material improvement and the methods of realising it—that brought men into association, into groups and tribes and nations, an association that has given birth to, and moulded, their thoughts and aspirations, their loves and hates and fears.

Generally speaking, man's capacity to love his neighbour will depend upon the economic relationship of both. It is sheer fatuity to expect one to love the other when they are mutually engaged in a grim struggle for the wherewithal to live, a struggle that the conditions governing industry forces upon them. A man may understand that industrial conditions render it impossible for his fellow to do other than battle with him for bread, but he cannot love unless it is possible to conceive of a love that finds expression in a fight in no respect dissimilar from the fight between men who hate and hate whole-heartedly. The law of self preservation impels the fight and the lesson is soon learnt that the victory is to the best hater rather than the best lover. It is quite possible that the participants in the struggle may prefer to love each other, but they will understand if they give heed to the Socialist that the only way by which love can be made possible is through the removal of the conditions that necessitate hate. They must first of all remove the conditions that set them at each other's throat. Tolstoy has laid hold of the wrong end of the problem, and it is because his gospel can only have mischievous effects upon the endeavours we are making to organise the working-class upon the basis of their class interests, that we take the opportunity this letter affords to make it clear, upon his own showing, that he is outside the Socialist movement at the same time that we echo the quaintly worded regret of our Japanese comrades that "Tolstoy is yet in error as to Socialism and the solution of social problem just in the same way as the common shallow people do."

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

"An Unauthorised Program" and "Poverty" by R. J. Derfel. These will be noticed in next issue.

Also "Labor," St. Louis; "The Chokugen," Tokio; "La Internacional," Buenos Aires.

Can the Capitalist Class Protect its own Interests?

—:o:—

It is a common assertion that the profit, rent, and interest forming the income of the ruling class is a natural remuneration for its superior intellectual power and for its greater responsibilities. The idea put forth is that profit forms the "wage of management," the "rent of ability" of the capitalist class.

The working-class are warned against the agitator who talks against the capitalist class and the capitalist system of production. The worker is not to be led into opposition to

the capitalist whose interests —so runs the tale—are in no way opposed to his own. There is a harmony existing between them. The worker must not in

any way be led into disturbing that harmony. Capitalism must not be abolished, it must be "moralised." The capitalist must not be treated as an enemy but as a friend. He must not be coerced but must be won over to a recognition of the true position of the workers and he will immediately seek to alleviate it.

A pretty story, forsooth! One which, fortunately for themselves, the working-class are little likely to believe. They know full well that the position of the capitalist-class is opposed to theirs inasmuch as the wealth of the capitalist depends upon the poverty of the worker—the poverty of the worker exists only through the wealth of the capitalist. Profits and dividends are raised when wages are lowered, and any increase of wages under given conditions must necessarily be at the expense of profits and dividends.

This is a very obvious conclusion. The worker creates a certain supply of wealth in a given time. The greater the quantity of that wealth the capitalist takes as profits or dividends the smaller is the quantity remaining for the wealth producers. The endeavour of each class to raise his share as against the other is a necessary result of this state of things and constitutes one of the features of the economic warfare which Socialists have named the class struggle.

Even were it not the case that the ideas of the capitalist-class *qua* capitalist-class are the reflex of their economic position and that they are thereby precluded from understanding the ideas,

the longings, the feelings, and the aspirations of the working-class there would be no reason for trusting them. If they knew the sufferings of the worker and wished to redress them is there anything to show for a

belief that they would transform those wishes into realities?

We fancy not. To judge from the general ineptitude and inefficiency which they display in dealing with the interests of their own class—the inadequacy of their methods of securing their own class benefits it is at all events conceivable that an even greater degree of ineptitude and inefficiency would arise in dealing with the welfare of an alien class.

In every sphere of life they have monopolised the advantages but have been unable to make the best of them. The fact that their class is based upon a system of virtual slavery seems to stultify their ideals, dwarf their efforts, and belittle their every aim. The canker-worm is at the core of their civilisation, and the greed of gain, the motive power of their civilisation, has forced from their brains and hearts all pure thoughts and lofty ideals. The art, the literature, the drama, the science, the religion, and the politics of the age are purely commercial—the natural products of a commercial age. "Getting and spending they lay waste their powers."

In nothing is this incapacity of our ruling class more manifest than in their foreign politics—a euphemism for the exploitation of the weaker races and for the prevention of such exploitation by races equally strong. Arising

from the productive system and its ramifications in the credit system is the necessity of monopolising markets. From this springs the jealousies between nations, the necessity of protecting commercial spheres of influence. The resultant friction tends to end in the breaking off of diplomatic relations followed by war.

Inevitable products of it. Every civilised country prepares for this. The national politics have more interest in war than in peace and efforts are made to maintain a permanent fighting force for offensive and defensive purposes. To maintain a standing army and navy with a further auxiliary force huge sums are annually expended. Plans are everlastingly being devised for the improvement of our war organisation—plans which receive the authorisation and support of the Executive and are thereupon shelved. Time and again it has been declared to be absolutely imperative to fortify and protect London by a line of forts—and time and again the capitalist-class has done nothing.

Another feature and one of some importance to the ruling class is the fact that Great Britain does not grow her own food supplies. Every year a larger percentage of our wheat is derived from foreign countries, the actual stock of wheat varying from three to fourteen weeks' supply.

In case of a war between the ruling class of this country and some important Continental power, or even between two Continental powers, this fact might have the effect of raising wheat prices to starvation point. Even during the Civil War in America the cost of insurance of goods from America was raised enormously and much more would this be the case in a war in which the British Government was itself engaged. Insurances and freights would be raised, trade and commerce would be hampered, the market would be restricted, prices would rise, and the misery of the worker would be accentuated while the luxury of the capitalist would be diminished.

Much more dangerous would the position be if the country with which this country was at war was one which controlled the source of any considerable section of our wheat supply—say Russia or the United States. The flow of wheat would be stopped at its source and the supply would prove inadequate. To the capitalist this would be of less concern than to the worker, for he who has the longest purse can secure the first draft of an inadequate food supply.

Now to anyone who has studied the food problem it is well known that this country could supply not only sufficient wheat, but also sufficient of every other kind of agricultural and dairy produce to comfortably feed a much larger population than the forty millions who at present inhabit Great Britain.

The Food Question considered. The annual wheat requirement of the people of this country is at present 6 bushels per head, making a total requirement of 240,000,000 bushels per annum. Of this 60,000,000 bushels are grown at home while the remainder is imported.

Taking this country we find that it possesses the finest wheat growing land in the world. Its productivity per acre—29 bushels—is higher than that of any country which cultivates the cereal upon an equally large scale. Allowing that the present methods of farming are continued and that the average of 29 bushels to the acre could be maintained over a sufficiently large area it would require 13,000 square miles to grow the whole quantity needed for consumption in this country. The area of the United Kingdom—121,000 square miles should surely allow of this placing of 13,000 square miles under wheat culture. Kropotkin gives the cultivable area as 50,000 square miles.

At present we have in the United Kingdom under cultivation:—

Wheat	3,000 square miles.
Barley	3,400 " "
Oats	6,500 " "

making a total of 12,900 square miles devoted to the cultivation of mixed cereals.

Again, we are informed by scientific agriculturists that by intensive agriculture—that is by a system under which the soil is specially prepared, where deep ploughing is resorted to, where the seeds are selected by the progressive eliminating of the unfit, an immense increase of

productivity is to be secured.

The attitude of the Socialist. To the Socialist who has neither country nor patriotism it matters little whether England feeds herself or not. With true international sympathy he

wishes to obtain the means of satisfying the material requirements of himself and his fellows with as little expenditure of social effort as possible. But from the point of view of the patriot it is very singular that, possessing the power of producing sufficient for home requirements, we continue importing the greater portion of our food supplies.

Every year a large portion of the land is allowed to go out of cultivation and the problem becomes intensified. Men give place to deer in many parts of the country. Now it would be easy to show that there are limitations—individual and economic—preventing the British farmer from holding his own with his competitor in other countries. On another occasion I may be permitted to discuss them at length.

It seems strange that the ruling class of this country holding the power of entirely solving this problem of food production should do nothing to solve it. The solution, however, involves the resumption of ownership of the land by the people, and it has been written on the scrolls of fate that in the transformation of individual private property into collectivist common property the land must come last.

The answer in the negative. We have then to consider that the ruling class cannot rule, cannot administer the country—they can only drift upon the current of progress.

They are an effete and impotent class, ruling by the power of the *status quo*. With them the working-class has no interest in common and the worker must learn that it is only by consciously organising himself in a political party for the purpose of getting rid of this capitalist class that he can in any way help forward the emancipation of his class. R.E.

"ELECTIONITIS."

OF COURSE, the critics have been having at me anent my arguments in the last issue. It is a way that critics have, and I believe other notabilities have been victims of this species of organic life which is so hard to classify. The particular sample of the unspeakable order whom I have in my mind's eye at the moment appears to base his claim to lay down the law economic on the fact that he has read W. T. Stead's *If Christ came to Chicago*. One point he maintains is that the return to labour is dominated by the cost of subsistence, and, too modest to claim that his pronouncement alone places the matter beyond dispute, he says that Karl Marx agrees with him. Well, to save trouble, I will agree with him also, after which there is nothing more to be said upon the matter. But having thus simply established the great truth that the return to labour is dominated by the cost of subsistence, we have still to deal with the inquisitive man's query, "Why?" And from what I know of the inquisitive man he is not likely to be satisfied with the woman's answer (if I may say it without raising the sex question) "Because it is."

Now I do not wish to be understood to imply that the variations in the relative proportions of supply and demand in the labour market are to be explained by the accelerated or retarded growth of the working-class population. In stating that a greater material return to labour must result in an increased production of labour-power I have made the proviso that other conditions remain constant. Such a consumption under the given conditions would, of course, be only the insistence of the natural law of life. But capitalism has laws of its own; and my point is that it is these laws of capitalism that determine that the return to labour shall fluctuate about a certain point, and which set limitations upon, or—I dare narrow it down to this—render utterly ineffective, any and all interference of man save such interference take the shape of the abolition of the form of pro-

duction which is supported by these laws.

To insist that, under certain conditions, an increased return to labour will result in an increased production of labour-power is not by any means to say that such result will take place in fact. If other things did remain unaltered, that is to say, if the increased return to labour which the palliatives aim at did not set in motion certain antagonistic and irresistible forces which would presently compensate capital for its previous disbursement, then such increased return to labour must have the result I have indicated. I would venture to suggest, seemingly against the opinion of Marx, and therefore with humility, that capital does to a certain extent, and by a deeper and steadier movement than the more apparent ones to be mentioned later, as the tide is deeper and steadier than the waves, regulate the supply of labour-power to its average requirements (perhaps it would be more correct to attribute this activity to forces outside capital) by controlling the growth of the working-class population. It seems to me that only by this movement can the cost of its production dominate the value of labour-power, while its price is more directly under the influence of other movements. Whether this is correct or not matters very little at this juncture. Karl Marx shows very clearly that the labour market appears relatively full or empty, not on account of any absolute increase or decrease of the number of the wage-workers, but because the contraction or expansion of capital, calling for less or more labour-power in its operations, alters the proportion of the employed to the unemployed among the workers. This, then, is the outline of the process by which capital controls the supply of labour:—

Capital, growing by the absorption of profit, increases faster than the working-class population, restricted as the latter is by the degree of exploitation, and presently outstrips the supply of labour-power. The result of this is a rise in wages; and since this can only take place at the expense of the rate of surplus-value, the growth of capital is checked, firstly by the reduction of the proportion of profit which it could possibly add to itself, and secondly (owing to the decreased rate of profit offering smaller incentive to productive activity) by the reduction of the proportion of realised profit which is converted into new capital. So the growth of capital itself raises up obstacles to its continued expansion, and it next proceeds to remove those obstacles. The relative proportion of the unemployed to employed having fallen below the point of greatest advantage to capital, the latter sets about a readjustment of the labour-market. This is accomplished by the simple expedient of increasing the productivity of labour. Machinery already in partial use becomes profitable to a still larger circle of employers; invention is quickened and new machinery, throwing many out of employment and consequently into the reserve army of labour on the one hand, on the other hand places at the disposal of capital another and lower strata of labour-power. And the supply of surplus labour-power having been so adjusted to the needs of capital, wages again decrease, larger profits again stimulate industrial activity, capital expands by leaps and bounds and rushes on till it raises again in its path the obstacle to extension—a relatively small unemployed or industrial reserve army. And so the round is repeated.

All this is on the authority of Karl Marx. Whether it is endorsed by the author of *If Christ came to Chicago* I am unable to say: perhaps my critic can. And that reminds me that the latter has led me rather away from my intended line of argument, which was to show that, given the competitive labour-market—the very vital spot of capitalism—the return to labour is prescribed by laws which, while permitting temporary interferences, use the effects of these interferences as a means of restoring the normal degree of exploitation, and even of exacting compensation for the earlier advantage such interference may have given the workers, and that, therefore, all such artificial interferences with the return to labour (in which category we must place nearly all the so-called palliatives) must fail to effect their purpose of bettering the material conditions of the working-class. That they might benefit a section I will not deny, but I, for one, if I desired the advancement of any section, see no reason why I

should not rest content with the magnificence of the capitalist section.

Let any thinking man study the working of the marvellous laws by which capital, sensitive to every fluctuation in the flow of its life's blood, profit, controls the material conditions of those whom it only suffers to exist for the purpose of producing that profit, and then, having learned how faithfully capital is served by these laws, he may judge how little they may be defied or circumvented. Let him observe how a rise in wages is met by the extension of the circle of the profitable employment of machinery, how the shorter day is counterbalanced by speeding up and increased output, how the depleted labour market is rendered fat and redundant by the contraction of capital and the greater use of labour-saving machinery, how every effort of man to find some little amelioration is baffled and beaten by those vigilant sheep-dogs, the laws of capital; and observing all these movements, tireless and irresistible as the tides, he will begin at last to understand why we so steadily refuse to direct the workers' strength to be broken against these implacable laws.

The palliatives, so far from being desirable to the workers, are very quicksands for the entanglement of working-class feet. They are the means of seduction in the cunning hands of capital, and possess a power for capitalist defence that only the stewards of capital seem to realise. These gentlemen know that they properly belong to capital's armoury. To how many of us is the tale familiar, of the Russian noble who was chased by wolves. He was up to the palliative dodge. One article after another he flung to the wolves for them to wrangle and delay over, and they missed their prey after all. This is the chief use of reforms. Cleverly handled there is a century of respite for capitalism in the palliative programme of the reform parties—and who can doubt that they will be cleverly handled?

Those who are urging the workers on after the palliative chimera are assuming a responsibility of profound gravity, notwithstanding that they take it up lightly as a child draws breath. That they assume this responsibility in the name of Socialism compels our strenuous opposition: we dare not be silent because we dare not be implicated. We do not doubt that a certain early progress will attend the efforts of the reformers: that is always the portion of those who take the line of least resistance. But when the lever meets little resistance it is moving little weight; and the weight we are trying to get our lever under is a stupendous one.

The effect of "electionitis" upon those who yield themselves guarded by anything less than the most stringent and exclusive of Socialist restrictions, up to its seduction, is utter political prostitution. Examples of the truth of this statement might be given *ad nauseam*, but one case which has recently come under my notice will suffice. At this November election in West Ham the Stratford Branch S.D.F. contested the High Street Ward. A really sterling Election Address was rounded off by the usual list of palliatives which the candidate pledged himself to work for in order to "ease" the condition of the workers. And among others appears this:—"School Board and Poor Rate to be a national charge." I do not know whether I should be sooner forgiven if I credited the participants with unshamable dishonesty or with incredible ignorance, but, fortunately, the choice is not mine. The clear drafting of the Address testifies to their knowledge of the position, and so doing convicts them of dishonesty. Further, the members of this branch have recently lifted themselves on to the pedestal of notoriety by the vehemence with which they have publicly asserted that rates are no concern of the workers, and that they did not care if they went up "to twenty shillings in the pound." If rates are the concern of the workers it is dishonest to say they are not; if they are no concern of the workers it is treachery for working-class representatives to pledge themselves in connection with them. It is interesting to recall that "electionitis" three years ago led the Committee fighting this ward to dodge a resolution which the present scribe got passed, to the effect "that Terrett be not allowed on MacAllen's platform," by the simple expedient of putting MacAllen on Terrett's platform! Which makes one sigh for the honour even of thieves.

A. E. JACOMB.

SOCIALISM AND RESPECTABILITY.

SOCIALISM is the political expression of the recognition by the working-class of their suppression and oppression under the present form of society, based as it is upon their exploitation, and politically administered as it is solely with a view to conserving, and, as far as possible, perpetuating their exploitation and subjection.

Like every other social ideal in which men expressed their wants and aspirations, Socialism has its history, its stages of growth. The working-class, oppressed from birth, have made manifest their desire for human conditions—for liberty—in stages which correspond with the stages of social development by and through which the working-class have arrived at their present numerical proportion to the rest of the population, their present degree of want and suffering, of interdependence and of knowledge, and their present fast developing determination to have Socialism, and with it liberty, and to have it *now*. The first vague conception of Socialism was born in the study of the leisured philosopher—a suggestion thrown out by men of culture for the better drilling and re-organisation of the non-cultured, common people. And for long it remained the plaything of Culture.

The working-class struggle for emancipation was at first weak, spasmodic, vague. Here a rick-burning, there a machinery-smashing riot; here a tempestuous revolt, there an abject petitioning of king, kaiser, or local magnate, for pity on the poor. But as the working-class grew with the development of capitalism, they learnt the lessons which are best learnt and longest remembered by those who have eaten the bread of affliction and drunk the waters of bitterness. They had tried individual revolt, and by its failure learnt the necessity of organised collective effort. They had tried by begging to obtain concessions, and had been treated as beggars. They had tried political efforts aimed at reform, had had reforms promised by capitalist politicians, had used their votes and voices to help these capitalist politicians wring the last vestige of political power from the aristocracy—only to find that promises have a proverbial use, that the little finger of Rehoboam was thicker than the loins of Solomon. Thus the working-class learned that their emancipation could only be achieved by a collective effort, organised and intelligently aimed at the conquest of the political power and the effecting in the teeth of their oppressors of a Socialist Revolution. The intelligent movement of the working-class towards emancipation reached maturity in the struggle for Socialism and the lessons learnt in their life of struggle and suffering are crystallised in the Principles of The Socialist Party of Great Britain. Bearing in mind this process by which Socialism was brought into being, nourished and developed, we have a scientific touchstone by which to discover the real inwardness of any one of the many volumes (professing to expound Socialism) which have been launched upon a suffering public.

And the "latest born and (more or less) loveliest far" of these is "Socialism and Society," by Mr. J. R. MacDonald, a leader of the I.L.P. (a body whose ruling delusion is that it is a Socialist Party) and secretary and high priest of the L.R.C., whose "independent" "working-class" Members of Parliament hang loyally on to the tail of the Liberal Party.

The book seems to have been written in order to justify the round-about road to the Liberal rump which these two bodies conjointly think it necessary to follow, but probably few even of his friends will be able to unreservedly congratulate Mr. MacDonald on the result of his efforts, while an entirely unbiassed critic may well set to marvelling why he wrote the book at all.

The first obstacle to front him is the Revolutionary ferocity of the angry working-class, and the old, old, scientific lumber is trotted out; the blessed word "evolution" is many times invoked to show that "revolution" is a dark impossibility, and that the class-struggle does not exist and, with much magical muttering of "science" and "Darwin," that the establishment of the State of Socialism must be the work of a select

company of cultured persons, elected by a grateful working-class who will wait patiently while the Elected Persons solemnly proceed to discuss, and perhaps to pass, a series of measures of experimental amelioration—"laboratory experiment, not revolution, is the method of Socialism emerged from its Utopian and pseudo-scientific stages." (p. 179.) "Public ownership, after all, is Socialism." (p. 59, footnote.)

In writing a complete explanation of what Socialism is and bringing it to this conclusion, Mr. MacDonald is compelled to fall foul of most of the recognised classics of Socialism. Especially is he dogged at every step by the grim and terrible spectre of Marx. At least a fourth of the book is given up to a detailed attack upon Marx and Engels, but, as usual, the criticism does not betray even a nodding acquaintance with the writings criticised. Mr. MacDonald reads "the emancipation of the working-class must be the work of the working-class itself." This is enough. It is revolution! It is Utopian! It is not scientific! It is vulgar! It is not "respectable!" Marx, it seems, is not the first of the scientific Socialists: he is the "last of the Utopians." And the first of the scientific Socialists is Mr. J. R. MacDonald, who has made Socialism respectable!

Mr. MacDonald has put into words the thoughts of the small middle-class. To understand what this class think it is necessary to look at the relative social position they occupy, viz. sandwiched between the working-class on the one hand and the capitalist-class proper on the other. They are threatened with extinction from both sides. Every move forward of capital flings a section of them down into the ranks of the working-class. Every day that brings the working-class closer together and impels them to the grimly inevitable battle for emancipation threatens them with extinction. Hence the small middle-class (the class of small producers, shopkeepers, house-owners, journalists, and professional Respectability generally) is in word the most Insurrectionary, and in deed the most Reactionary of all existing sections. They shriek against capital—because of their imminent bankruptcy—and call upon the workers to help limit its power. They shriek at the working-class for its revolutionary tendency, and call upon capital to help them preserve "Law and Order," "Property, Religion, and Respectability."

And the nearer their end the louder their screams.

To this see-saw striving of this class can be traced all the elements of confusion in present day politics:—Single Tax and Land Nationalisation, Free Meals and Farm Colonies, Passive Resistance and Municipalised Milk. And hence also Mr. J. R. MacDonald's self-contradiction is the clearest proof that his "Socialism" and his "society" are the "Socialism and society" of the Respectable Small Middle-Class. Mr. MacDonald denies that a class-war exists on one page and on another proves its existence:—"Thus we see how machinery which might lighten labour, supplants it when used in the interests of a capitalist class. . . . Thus we see how tools, a dead factor, rule men, the living factor in production, and how a class engaging in production for profits controls the class which takes part in production in order to maintain life. . . . A pillar of Sabbatarianism can prove satisfactorily to himself that his works must . . . go seven days in the week. The owner of the land and the means of production is the owner of the lives of the people. He holds society in the hollow of his hand." (pp. 52-53.) And of course there must be no revolution: the working-class must patiently endure while MacDonald & Co. "experiment."

I should have liked to have gone over Mr. MacDonald's critique of Marx in detail, but the Editor of T.S.S. says that he doesn't want serials. However, Marx has retorted on MacDonald and his light by prophetic anticipation:—

"He wished to be the sympathiser; he is a composite error. He wished to soar as a man of science above the Bourgeoisie and the proletarians; he is only the petty bourgeois, tossed about continually between capital and labour, between political economy and communism." *The Poverty of Philosophy.*

And again:—"A part of the bourgeoisie is desirous of redressing social grievances, in order to secure the continued existence of bourgeois

society. To this section belong economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working-class, organisers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole and corner reformers of every imaginable kind. This form of Socialism has, moreover, been worked out into complete systems." We may cite Mr. J. R. MacDonald's "Socialism and Society" as an example of this form. "The Socialistic bourgeoisie want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom. They desire the existing state of society minus its revolutionary and disintegrating elements. They desire a bourgeoisie without a proletariat. . . . Bourgeois Socialism attains adequate expression when and only when it becomes a mere figure of speech. Free Trade: for the benefit of the working-class. Protective duties: for the benefit of the working-class. Prison Reform: for the benefit of the working-class. This is the last word and the only seriously meant word of Bourgeois Socialism. It is summed up in the phrase: the bourgeois is a bourgeois—for the benefit of the working-class!"—*Communist Manifesto.*

The ethics of Socialism, says J. R. MacDonald, are provided by Evangelicalism; its politics by Liberalism. We leave the courteous reader to the task of picturing a Holy Trinity compounded of "General" Booth, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, and Mr. J. Ramsay MacDonald!

THOS. A. JACKSON.

LITERARY CURIOSITIES.

No. 2. —TOLSTOY ON SOCIALISM.

[Reprinted from "The Chokugen" (the plain speaker), the organ of the Socialist Party of Japan]

—:—

Toula, Yasnaya Poliana.

Dear friend Isao Abe (Editor, the Chokugen),
It was a great pleasure for me to receive your letter and your paper, with the English article. I thank you heartily for both.

Though I never doubted that there are in Japan a great many reasonable, moral and religious men, who are opposed to the horrible crime of war, which is now perpetrated by both betrayed and stupefied nations,—I was very glad to get the proof of it.

It is a great joy for me to know that I have friends and co-workers in Japan, with which I can be in friendly intercourse.

Wishing to be quite sincere with you, as I wish to be with every esteemed friend, I must tell you that I do not approve of socialism and am sorry to know that the most spiritually advanced part of you—so clever and energetic—people has taken from Europe the very feeble, illusory and fallacious theory of socialism, which in Europe is beginning to be abandoned.

Socialism has for its aim the satisfaction of the meanest part of human nature—his material well-being and by the means it proposes, can never attain them.

The true well-being of humanity is spiritual i. e. moral and includes the material well-being. And this higher goal can be attained only by religious i. e. moral perfection of all the units which composes nations and humanity.

By religion I understand the reasonable belief in a (general for all humanity) law of God, which practically is exposed in the precept of loving every man and doing to every body what one wishes to be done to you.

I know that this method seems to be less expedient than socialism and other frail theories, but it is the sole true one. And all the efforts we make in trying to realise false—and not reaching their aims—theories only hinder as to employ true means to attain the degree of happiness of mankind and of every individual which is proper to our times.

Excuse me for the liberty I take to discuss your creed, and for my bad English and believe me to be your true friend

LEO TOLSTOY.

During the September quarter the London Society of Compositors paid in provident allowances, 7,406l. 6s. 3d., of which 4,545l. had to be raised by sale of Consols.

BORING FROM WITHIN.

THE article on Trade Unionism that appeared in the September issue of THE SOCIALIST STANDARD evoked considerable criticism amongst the members of the Party. The article did not quite convey the idea of the writer, having to be condensed because of the demands upon our space. The critics mainly contend that what was advocated was "boring from within," and some condemn the article because of that. Let us look at the facts.

Most comrades understand and admit that trade organisation is essential, essential for two reasons; firstly, because of immediate help by organisation; secondly, and this is most important, because with the proper organisation of the workers on industrial lines the foundation of the industrial democracy of the Socialist Republic is laid. The unions cannot be ignored and we must have Socialist Industrial Unions. Here, then, arises the difficulty. We do not think much good can be done with the existing unions: they are too deeply in the rut of the old craft antagonisms—the splitting up of the working-class,—and their "leaders" being mainly interested in perpetuating this sectional strife because of their paid jobs, sell out the interests of the union members and keep their hold on the unions to prevent any great headway being made.

We Socialists want to see Industrial Unionism, that is, we want to see all the workers in each trade organised, and the various trades in each industry affiliated to the one union, and the various industrial divisions again affiliated, thus forming one huge, cohesive organisation of the workers. Still further, when the workers are organised in the factory, workshop, and elsewhere, for the overthrow and not the perpetuation of capitalism, then the other phase must come into play—they must endorse and support only the political party of their emancipation, that is, the Socialist Party. Without industrial organisation no political progress, without political organisation no sound economic progress. Just as the capitalist class exerts its power, both in the workshop and in the governing bodies, so must the organised workers use their power in both ways. Neither is complete in itself. The working-class organised on the political field for its emancipation must act in conjunction with its counterpart on the industrial field. None of the existing unions is organised in this way, and all the alleged progress made by Social Democrats and I.L.P.s is proved, upon investigation, to be fictitious. The South West District L.R.C. and Trades and Labour Council is a case in point. Besides, none of the "borers from within" has condemned the present method of organisation, on the contrary, some of them have, so far as outside evidence shows, quietly acquiesced in acts of the most deliberate treachery it is possible to conceive of. In some unions it has been these Social Democrats and I.L.P.s who have instigated the infamous business.

Undoubtedly, the members of The Socialist Party of Great Britain will have to do on the economic field what they have already done on the political field, namely, establish a sound organisation because not one exists at present. But let it be borne in mind that we are a young Party, that it will take some years to build up a revolutionary political party, and that at present we have not the numerical and financial strength to organise the Socialist Industrial Alliance. We cannot have a Party without members, therefore we have to be propagandists. We cannot have Trade Unions without wage-workers, therefore, if we would move in an intelligent manner, we must carry on an organised agitation and education within the existing unions to which our members belong, so as to form a nucleus of sound Socialists in each. They should proceed with the educational work to endeavour to capture the unions as they stand at present (a very remote possibility) and also that they can get a sufficient number of sound men within the unions so that when we are strong enough, and conditions are ripe, we can call them out to form the foundation of the Socialist Union.

This, and this alone, is the excuse for a

member's active participation in the work inside existing unions. Better do this and build a solid foundation, by education, even as we are doing within the Party at present, than pass pious resolutions instructing the E.C. to form Socialist Unions at a time when it is a numerical and financial impossibility. Let us condemn and expose the rottenness of the existing unions and the treachery of those who boss them. Let us educate to the best of our ability and opportunity the rank and file to a proper appreciation of the situation, and we shall be doing some of the necessary pioneering for the new Socialist Industrial Union. E. J. B. ALLEN.

FROM OUR BRANCHES.

ISLINGTON.

We are still successfully carrying on our outdoor operations in this district, and during September we reached our highest sale of *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD*, having sold 338 copies of No. 13. Up to the end of September we had sold 529 copies of the Party Manifesto; if other branches are doing as well the entire edition will shortly be exhausted. The people are asking us for further literature, which we trust the Party will issue early next year. The collections taken up at our meetings are well maintained, and the Party Treasurer receives his quota thereof each month. Our flourishing financial position enables us to make a donation every month to the Party Organ Fund, and the Islington comrades have not been slow in contributing their share towards the expenses of the new Central Office of the Party.

These excellent results are due in no small degree to the able assistance of Party speakers like comrades Fitzgerald and Jackson. Jackson's addresses bear the unmistakable impress of a fertile and studious mind, and we look forward with confidence to his career as a platform exponent of the principles of the Party.

The Islington Branch has invited Comrade Jackson to deliver a series of lectures on "The Philosophy of Socialism." These lectures commenced on October 24th and will be continued every Tuesday, 9 p.m., at the Co-operative Stores, 79, Grove Road, Holloway, N. There will be about 13 lectures altogether. The course will differ from the usual style of economic class, as it is the intention of the lecturer to approach the science of Socialism by easy political, sociological and historical studies, illustrated by examples drawn from geology and biology.

C. LEHANE.

NORTH LONDON DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Seeing that this Council has done a considerable amount of propaganda work, and seeing that the work has been very successful, it is but right and proper that it should be put on record in the Official Organ of the Party. Week night meetings were run throughout July, August, and September, and in some cases are being continued during October. These meetings—including the stations at Gurnault Place, Clerkenwell; Highbury Corner; St. Ann's, Tottenham; High St., Hornsey; Waltham Abbey and Waltham Cross—have, in many cases been excellent, with large sales of literature and good collections. Six meetings per week exclusive of Sunday, is, in brief, the Report of the Council for this small district for the three months. Next year we are confident of being able to improve upon this, for we have plenty of speakers, actual and potential, and abundance of energy and enthusiasm. While we wait, somewhat impatiently, for the return of Spring with its opportunities for outdoor work, we are not idle, and our indoor lectures at Dovecote Hall, Wood Green, are most gratifying. All along the line we are gaining ground. Conscious of the correctness of our principles, and of the honesty and justice of our purpose, and confident that the workers of North London will eventually realise, as we have done, that their only hope lies in Socialism, we are content to peg away in our endeavours to show that by and through our methods alone can the advent of Socialism be hastened.

DICK KENT, Sec.

Back numbers of *THE SOCIALIST STANDARD* can be had through any Branch Secretary.

S.P.G.B. North London District Council. LECTURES FOR NOVEMBER.

—: DOVECOTE HALL, —:

78, High Road, Wood Green, at 7.30.

Nov. 5th—F. C. WATTS:

"Working-Class Politics."

Nov. 12th—J. KENT:

"Socialism and Free Maintenance."

Nov. 19th—T. W. ALLEN:

Subject to be announced.

Nov. 26th—W. GIFFORD:

"Evolution of Society."

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.

The first instalment of our translation of

KARL KAUTSKY'S ERFURTER PROGRAMME

is held over, our Comrade Kautsky not having yet returned the manuscript to us.

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CENTRAL.—Membership obtained only through the Executive Committee. Applications should be sent to the General Secretary.

CLERKENWELL.—J. Fitzgerald, Sec., 34, Wilmingtton Square, W.C. Branch meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday in each month at 3 p.m. at 34, Wilmingtton Square, W.C.

EAST HAM.—G. Wilson, Sec., 14, Coleridge Avenue, Manor Park, E. Branch meets every Wednesday at 8.30 at above address.

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WEST HAM.—G. C. H. Carter, Sec., 107, Ham Park Rd., Stratford. Branch meets Mondays 7.30, followed at 8.30 by discussion, at Spiritualist Hall, 32, Dames Road, Forest Gate.

WOOD GREEN.—J. Crump, Secretary, 10, Stanley Villas, Westbury Avenue, Wood Green, N. Branch meets every 1st and 3rd Thursday at 8.30 p.m.

LITERATURE AGENCY.

Comrades desiring to acquire or sell books on Social Science, etc. (new or second-hand), should send particulars to the Publications Department, S.P.G.B., 1A, Caledonian Road, King's Cross, London, N., from whom the undermentioned unsoiled works may be obtained at prices stated.

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